

Making Music: Musical Instruments in Zimbabwe Past and Present By C. Jones. Harare, Academic Books, 1992, xxiii, 183 pp., ISBN 0-949229-22-9, Z\$27.00.

Making Music is a teachers' handbook intended as a source of information for those Zimbabwean music teachers both at primary and secondary levels who want to make their music lessons constructive, practical, informative, interesting and relevant to young Zimbabweans.

Although the focus of the book is on instruments (in particular those instruments which are indigenous to Zimbabwe) and their construction, this information is placed in its social and historical context.

A prefatory glossary clarifies technical words used in the main body of the text and two appendices provide information in concentrated form on the science of sound and the reading of the tablatures used in the book. There are extensive notes at the end of each chapter, acknowledgements to both researchers and performers and a bibliography, all of which give teachers ample opportunity to check the accuracy of the information and to further their own research.

The strength of the book lies in its thoroughness and attention to detail, which is understandable when one considers the author's background in science education. With reference to *mbira*, for example, there is a full description, with line drawings and measurements, of how to make a *karimba*; there are descriptions of all the major *mbira* (and some minor ones) found in Zimbabwe; playing techniques for each type of *karimba* and the social uses of its music. This approach is followed for each of the major instruments.

The different ethnic groups in Zimbabwe are given balanced representation. It is surprising how many Ndebele names the author has unearthed — especially as Ndebele traditions are largely vocal and the focus of the book is on instruments. Every attempt has been made to find terms in as many languages as possible for each instrument and for the materials used in constructing them. In addition to the Shona and Ndebele terms, Tonga, Ndaou, Sena, Zulu, Kalanga and Chopi names also appear.

The book has some weaknesses. The editing is often poor; the typographical errors and inconsistencies in the book are numerous. The printing of the text and line drawings is clear but the photographs appear grey and indistinct; for example, on page 66 the string in the *chipendani* picture is hardly visible. The overall standard of the photography is adequate but some pictures lack style and personality and these cheapen the appearance of the book. The presentation of the pulse-line transcriptions is particularly poor. Often a transcription finishes half way down the page and the rest of the page is filled with empty staves. In the chromatic scale on page 178, the accidentals are incorrectly written and there is no clef.

The coverage of the various chapters is uneven. The author seems to realize that in many areas her book may be almost the only suitable source material available and so she tries to cover every angle relevant to the subject.

As regards language and style, there is evidence that the author has had difficulty in deciding at what level to pitch the tone of the book. For

example, the language in chapter three is rather simplistic, that in chapter eight is suitable for a general adult readership, while the appendix on sound is complex and technical. This is the greatest problem with the book: its approach to its readership. It is meant as a guide to all music teachers in Zimbabwe but the level of knowledge among music teachers in this country differs greatly from school to school. In one institution, the music teacher may have a thorough grasp of Western music and is simply looking for a source book to provide detail relevant to the Zimbabwean context; in another school, the teacher may have a detailed knowledge of African music but have had little or no formal training in the subject. However, if there are areas in the book which are difficult to follow, one should remember that the book is meant as a complement to working with musicians who would describe and explain their work and perhaps provide assistance with the building of instruments.

But, all things considered, it is a pleasure to have, at last, a comprehensive, well-researched, scientifically accurate resource book on an important aspect of Zimbabwean music which is of practical use for most music courses in this country. Even so, we still need many more books like it.

Kunzwana Trust

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African Traditional Religions in Religious Education: A Resource Book with Special Reference to Zimbabwe Edited by G. ter Haar, A. Moyo and S. J. Nondo. Utrecht, Univ. of Utrecht, 1992, x, 224 pp., ISBN 90-393-0065-8, Z\$20,00.

This book is the result of a project on Religious Education carried out jointly by the University of Zimbabwe and the University of Utrecht over a period of seven years and is the last of a series of three publications issued by the project. It is intended to be a resource book in the hitherto neglected area of African Traditional Religions for use by teachers of Religious Education. This is in keeping with the avowed intent of Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education and Culture to adopt a multi-faith approach to religious studies. This book does not set out to be a text book but rather to serve as a resource book with a genuine multi-faith approach.

The editors contend that African Traditional Religions constitute the appropriate context against which other religions should be studied if religious concepts are to be communicated meaningfully to the people of Zimbabwe. To date, despite government policy that all Religious Education curricula adopt a multi-faith approach, the curricula remain, in fact, basically Christian in content. One of the reasons for this is almost certainly the lack of any other type of material available to teachers and curriculum development officers. The contention of the editors of this book that African Traditional Religions should form the background for the study of other faiths is 'a challenge to the churches' who, understandably, have tended to view multi-faith issues against a Christian background. I would also add that the editors' contention is a challenge to those possessing the